

Doctoral Dissertation

Title : The Development of Co-production Theory: The Cases of Swedish Parent Cooperative Pre-schools and Japanese Health Care and Welfare Cooperatives

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This paper examines the concept of co-production and the influence in the service quality and/or quantity in welfare fields through theoretical and empirical approaches. Previous research defines the concept of co-production as enhancement of the quality and/or quantity of services for users through voluntary efforts in public service provisions by professionals and users. Vincent Ostrom who is a public administration researcher introduced the concept in the 1970s. Nowadays, co-production initiatives are spreading as a new way to involve citizens in service provision and administration as well as in third sector organizations in welfare fields. First, this paper analyses definitions of co-production in previous research. Then, utilizing interview data from cases of co-production from Swedish parent cooperative pre-schools and Japanese health care and welfare cooperatives, this research examines actual conditions of the cooperation between users and staff in both cooperatives and the factor affecting their satisfaction.

The first chapter discusses the efficiency of co-production from Parks et al (1981), which is a major previous research promoting the application of the concept to public service fields.

The purpose of the second chapter is to examine the nature of co-production which is observed in new cooperatives to show that they are appropriate as an efficient scheme of welfare service providers. First, this chapter analyses the various concepts of co-production used by previous researchers and explains differences in acceptance of the concept in western countries and Japan. Second, this chapter shows Swedish parent cooperative pre-schools as typical cases and Japanese health care and welfare cooperatives as new cases of co-production. Finally, this chapter concludes that co-production is the service provision system in post-welfare states which realizes users' sovereignty under the support of professionals and governments.

The third chapter compares five types of Swedish pre-schools from the perspective of co-production level. Pestoff (2009) and Vamstad (2007, 2012) suggest that parent participation to direct child care service production has positive effects to users and staff satisfaction in Swedish parent cooperative pre-schools due to increasing their communication opportunities. First, the author interviewed managers in twelve Swedish parent cooperative pre-schools in 2015-2016. The results

indicate that while parent participation to direct child care services decreased, parent involvement in decision making processes concerning the management of the schools. This research concludes that the involvement of users and staff in decision making meetings having practical decision making rights is the most important factor of co-production for improving user and staff satisfaction. Second, the author interviewed managers in personnel cooperatives, parent and personnel cooperatives, municipal, and profit oriented pre-schools in Sweden, which revealed that they have different decision making systems among users and professionals. The author concludes that co-production in the decision making process is only observed in parent cooperatives, parent and personnel cooperatives and personnel cooperatives.

The fourth chapter explains recent changes of Japanese health care and welfare cooperatives from the case study of Rokko health care cooperative in Hyogo prefecture. These changes can be interpreted in the following way: First, health care and welfare cooperatives promote co-production in decision making, not only in user activities but also in businesses providing health care and nursing services. Second, health care and welfare cooperatives cooperate not only with users but also with staff and regional residents through activities and movement on people's living situations and community welfare. The chapter concludes that health care and welfare cooperatives shift to become more open and provide social value.

The purpose of the fifth chapter is to examine the position of co-production in social policy. Swedish policies have been regarded as being the one of the policies of "The Third Way". This chapter analyses Swedish theory and policy through the paradigm shift from New Public Management (NPM) to New Public Governance (NPG). Further detailed in this chapter are the entry policies of private providers in welfare services which have been implemented to generate co-production in Sweden.

The final chapter examines the difference between co-production and citizen participation on The Integrated Community Care System by the Japanese government. Further, with the development of the co-production concept in mind, this chapter argues that other types of providers in public services provide how to understand cases involving user participation in service production. The chapter presents the meaning of European countries experiences that shift from NPM to NPG in Japan.

This paper consistently discusses ideal welfare service provision. Co-production is a key concept as a way of decision making for efficient service production. This paper explains the efficiency of co-production from two points. First, the author argues that the necessary condition for co-production as an efficient service is users have the biggest decision making right and professional support in service provision for service quality and public financing for service quantity. Second, co-production resolves the incompleteness of information between users and providers and can provide appropriate services based on users' potential needs. On the other hand, social enterprises that solve social tasks are widespread all over the world in recent years. This trend shows that the most important aspect of welfare service is not the provider but whether or not user has the biggest decision making right in service provision. In short, co-production is the most important. Implications of these findings are in light of attention to switch from the service provision theory that is "who should provide services" to the initiative theory that is "who should be at the center of the decision making system" in the Japanese welfare service provision scheme.